

§ 965.5 Submittals by parties.

Within 15 days after receipt of the Recorder's notice, each party shall file with the Recorder a sworn statement of the facts supporting its claim to receipt of the mail together with a copy of each document on which it relies in making such claim. All such submittals shall be in duplicate. Upon receipt of such evidence, the Recorder shall send a copy of each submittal to the opposing party.

§ 965.6 Comments by parties.

Within 10 days of receipt of the other party's evidence, each party may file with the Recorder a statement setting forth in detail its disagreements, if any, with its opponent's statement and documents. The Recorder will send to each party a copy of the other party's comments.

§ 965.7 Default.

A party who fails to file the submittal required by § 965.5 may be held in default and the presiding officer may issue an initial decision that mail be delivered to the other party.

§ 965.8 Hearings.

(a) In the discretion of the presiding officer an oral hearing may be granted at the request of either, or both, parties or on the presiding officer's own initiative if there is a dispute as to a material issue of fact which can only be resolved by examination of witnesses.

(b) Hearings are held at the headquarters of the U.S. Postal Service, 475 L'Enfant Plaza West, SW., Washington, DC 20260–6100, or at such other place as may be designated by the presiding officer.

§ 965.9 Evidence.

(a) In general, admissibility will hinge on relevancy and materiality. However, relevant evidence may be excluded if its probative value is substantially outweighed by the danger of unfair prejudice, or by considerations of undue delay, waste of time, or needless presentation of cumulative evidence.

(b) Testimony shall be given under oath or affirmation and witnesses are subject to cross-examination.

(c) Agreed statements to fact are encouraged and may be received in evidence.

§ 965.10 Transcript.

Testimony and argument at hearings shall be reported verbatim, unless the presiding officer otherwise orders. Transcripts or copies of the proceedings are supplied to the parties at such rate as may be fixed by contract between the reporter and Postal Service.

§ 965.11 Initial decision.

The presiding officer shall render an initial decision in writing, based on the record, as expeditiously as possible, but to the extent practicable within 10 working days of closing of the record. The decision will be brief, containing summary findings of fact, conclusions of law, and reasons therefor. If there has been a hearing the presiding officer may in his discretion render an oral decision. A typed copy of such oral decision will subsequently be furnished to the parties to establish the date for commencement of time for requesting review of the initial decision.

§ 965.12 Appeal.

The initial or tentative decision will become final 10 days after its issuance and receipt by the parties unless the Judicial Officer, or by delegation the Associate Judicial Officer, in his sole discretion, grants review upon appeal of either party filed within that period, or on his own motion within that period. If an appeal is denied, the initial or tentative decision becomes the final agency decision on the issuance of such denial. The judicial Officer's decision on appeal is the final agency decision with no further agency review or appeal rights.

§ 965.13 Compromise and informal disposition.

Nothing in these rules precludes the compromise, settlement, and informal disposition of proceedings initiated under these rules at any time prior to the issuance of the final agency decision.

§ 965.14 Public Information.

The Law Librarian of the Postal Service maintains for public inspection